

What Are Community Requirements?

The City of Rockford is required to have and comply with a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit for its stormwater drainage system, known as a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System

(<http://www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater-discharges-municipal-sources#overview>).

The City of Rockford is regulated under Phase 1 of the NPDES program which is determined by population density. This permit requires the City to administer a stormwater management program to address the potential for discharges from the MS4 that negatively impact area waterways by reducing both pollutants in stormwater runoff and dumping of pollutants directly into the MS4. The permit contains specific required activities and programs that must be implemented to comply with the permit, such as stream and runoff monitoring, public education, industry inspections, construction inspections and more. See the City of Rockford's annual reports for a more detailed look at the program.

Smaller MS4 communities must comply with Phase II of the NPDES program. While their requirements are not as comprehensive as a Phase I community they too have items they must do to minimize pollutants entering waterways.



Why Care About Stormwater?

Stormwater pollution is one of the greatest threats to Rockford's creeks and rivers. Clean water means safe drinking water, places for recreation, commercial opportunities, healthy wildlife habitats, and adds beauty to the landscape. Rain washes pollution from streets, parking lots and lawns into storm sewers and drainage ditches then directly to our streams, rivers and ultimately, the ocean.



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For More Information about the City of Rockford's Stormwater Programs go to:
<http://www.rockfordil.gov/public-works/engineering-cip/stormwater.aspx>



STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM



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What is Stormwater?

Stormwater is runoff from rainfall and snowmelt. In areas where there has been little or no development most of the rainfall and snow melt soaks into the ground. Vegetation also aids in slowing runoff. In urban areas, buildings, roads, parking lots and other impervious surfaces do not allow water to soak into the ground which results in increased amounts of runoff at higher speeds. Along the way this runoff can pick up pollutants such as fertilizer and pesticides from yards, motor oil and other fluids from leaking cars, pet waste, and dirt tracked onto streets from vehicles and construction sites and even general wear from tires. All these pollutants runoff with the rainfall and snowmelt and pollutes downstream waterways.



Except for certain allowable items, no discharges, except for rain and snow melt, are allowed to enter the City's or Rockford's stormwater system without approval.



Where Does Stormwater Go?

The City of Rockford's entire stormwater drainage system ultimately drains to the Rock River. Many people think that our stormwater runoff is treated before entering the river. In Rockford this is not true. The City's storm drainage system and the sanitary system are two different things. While household waste from sinks and toilets enter the sanitary system and are ultimately treated any runoff outdoors will enter the City's storm system which includes: street gutters and inlets, pipes, grass and concrete channels, ditches, culverts, drainage ways, streams and detention basins. All of these conveyance systems ultimately drain to the Rock River without any type of treatment.



Anything you leave or discard outdoors or in one of the above systems also end up in the river.



What is Rockford Doing to Protect Stormwater Runoff?

The City of Rockford has a number of programs, policies and ordinances in place to protect stormwater runoff. These include:

- **Construction Site Inspections**
 - Active construction sites are inspected to assure sediment and other pollutants don't leave the site.
- **Industrial Inspections**
 - Inspect industrial facilities that have the potential of discharging pollutants into the stormwater system.
- **Illicit Discharge Investigations**
 - Citizen complaints of illegal dumping of pollutants such as oil, paint, trash yard waste, etc. are investigated with the responsible party required to clean up the pollutants.
- **Detention Basin Inspections**
 - All detention basins within city limits are inspected to assure they function properly. Responsible parties are notified of any required maintenance.
- **Stormwater & Creek Sampling**
 - Samples are collected from creeks and pipes and are analyzed for pollutants.

